

1 **PROCESS FOR MAKING A CURVED PI SHAPED PREFORM MADE FROM**
2 **WOVEN COMPOSITE MATERIALS**

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4 **ABSTRACT**

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7 The invention is a process for forming a 3D woven PI shaped
8 cross-section preform having a first and second bottom foot portions
9 and first and second upstanding leg portions for use in a structure
10 having at least one curved portion of a specific length. In detail, the
11 process includes the steps of: 1) cutting the treads parallel to the
12 direction of curvature into over a length equal to the length, such that
13 the cuts in each thread are spaced from the cuts in the adjacent treads;
14 2) stretching the portions of the preform requiring curvature; and 3)
15 forming the curvature in the preform.
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